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STATEMENT ON THE NATURE OF 4-H CLUB PROGRAMS
AT THE LOCAL LEVEL AND RELATIONSHIPS WITH FFA ACTIVITIES//

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There are 4-H Clubs in every rural county of the United States--developed out of local interest and with local voluntary leadership. They provide a junior age teaching outlet at the local level with respect to agricultural and home economics matters with practical application to this age group. These individual clubs are autonomous units and in no way affiliated into county, State, or National organizations. In addition to project work in the fields of agriculture and home economics, the educational services provided by the Extension Service to such clubs stress citizenship, cooperation with others in joint undertakings, leadership development, and the like.

Frequently local citizens, county fair boards, county governments, and other groups sponsor county-wide 4-H Club fairs, achievement days, and similar events at which time individuals or teams from the various county clubs may compete with one another in putting on demonstrations, may exhibit products growing out of their project work, and similar events.

Likewise State Extension Services in most States sponsor an annual 4-H Club round-up of some kind. A limited number of individual members have the privilege of participating in two National events, namely the 4-H Club Congress held at Chicago each year and sponsored and financed by a non-profit group of private citizens. The other is the National 4-H Club Camp held in Washington each year which is participated in by four delegates from each State participating, such delegates being selected on the basis of achievement. Member participation in both these events is financed through contributions by private citizens and groups rather than through the use of public money.

Vocational education work at the high school level in agriculture and home economics falls under another combination of government agencies, namely the U. S. Office of Education, the State Departments of Education, and local Boards of Education. Basically this is a more specific and intensive training program on a formal classroom basis in the fields of agriculture and home economics supplemented by project work in the non-school period. Instructional work is done almost completely, if not solely, by appropriate members of the high school staffs where such course work is offered.

There are formal organizations associated with this organized classroom work in these two fields. They are known as the Future Farmers of America and the Future Homemakers of America. (In those States where public school work is conducted on a segregated racial basis there are companion organizations known as New Farmers of America and New Homemakers of America for colored participants in this work.)

This organizational structure is not an integral part of the formal educational work but is directly associated with it as teachers involved serve as counselors to such local chapters and local chapters are organized into county and State units and a National organization. They also receive

voluntary contributions from interested public citizens and groups in support of their efforts. They sponsor certain events which have in part somewhat similar characteristics to the county, State, and National events mentioned above with respect to 4-H Club work.

Relationships at the local level between 4-H Clubs and their work and vocational education and the work of local chapters of Future Farmers of America and Future Homemakers of America are highly variable. In a large percentage of the counties and States working relationships are excellent. Both groups participate in the same public events such as county achievement days, county fairs, and the like. Likewise county agents and vocational teachers work together intimately in these counties. In other instances this spirit of cooperation does not prevail to the degree which would seem justified and some competition for recognition by the public is evident. Occasionally, but not generally, there is some friction over such questions as whether individual boys and girls should be permitted to belong to both a 4-H Club and a Future Farmers or a Future Homemakers Chapter. Although most professional workers associated with either of these activities feel that is a choice which is the right of the individual boy and girl, occasionally there are some professional workers at both State and county level who apparently use their influence to prevent individual boys and girls participating in both activities. Where such situations prevail it is obvious that the best working relationships do not exist.

However, at the National level excellent working relationships prevail between officials of the two Federal agencies directly concerned, namely the Office of Education of the Department of Health, Education and Welfare and the Federal Extension Service of the Department of Agriculture. However, these two agencies are not in a position to dictate to the States regarding these matters in view of the legal relationship between the Federal Government and the State Governments with respect to work in the educational field. Officials of these two agencies have been endeavoring to encourage full and effective cooperation within the States and counties between local 4-H Clubs and local chapters of Future Farmers of America and Future Homemakers of America as well as between local county extension agents and local vocational teachers. Progress has been made over the years in promoting better working relationships and more active cooperation at the State and local level. However, perfection has not been attained.

Both educational programs are needed and are enthusiastically supported locally. We feel that there is a place for both activities as both meet quite specific needs. Such difficulties as do exist do not arise from any legal or structural requirements, but rather from personality factors in the main.





